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Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04421 071434Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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O 071408Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5135
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BEIRUT 4421

EXDIS

FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, MILI, PBOR, IS, LE
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON

REF: (A) STATE 212389, (B) STATE 212440

1. I CALLED ON FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS AT 0930 SEPT 7 AT THE PRESIDENCY. I OPENED CONVERSATION BY MAKING POINTS IN PARAS 1-3 OF REF A. I THEN CAREFULLY SUMMARIZED FIRST FIVE POINTS IN PARA 2, AND PARA 3, OF REF B, EXPLAINING THAT WE WANT TO BE CERTAIN THAT WE ARE ACCURATELY REPRESENTING TO THE ISRAELIS THE NATURE OF THE ARRANGEMENTS BEING WORKED OUT FOR SOUTH LEBANON AND THAT THERE ARE NO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WHAT WE ARE TELLING THE ISRAELIS AND WHAT THE LEBANESE HAVE TOLD US. (I MADE NO MENTION OF FUTURE OF MARONITE CHRISTIANS IN SOUTH LEBANON OR THE "GOOD FENCE" AND NEITHER DID BOUTROS.) BOUTROS TOOK VERY CAREFUL NOTE AND CONFIRMED EACH POINT AS HE WENT ALONG. HE INDICATED HE FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE
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IMPORTANCE OF MAKING SURE THAT THERE WERE NO MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND NO SURPRISES. WE THEN WENT IN TO SEE PRESIDENT SARKIS (PRIME MINISTER SALIM AL-HOSS WAS ALSO PRESENT), AND BOUTROS CAREFULLY REPEASTED IN ARABIC THE POINTS THAT WE HAD JUST DISCUSSED. PRESIDENT SARKIS ALSO CONFIRMED THESE UNDERSTANDINGS, NOTING IN PARTICULAR THAT ABU IYAD HAD AGREED ON NEW LOCATIONS FOR PALESTINIAN

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POSTS IN SOUTH LEBANON, PLACING THEM AT LEAST TEN KILOMETERS FROM ISRAELI BORDER. DURING A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF DEPLOYMENT OF LEBANESE ARMY UNITS, IT WAS NOTED THAT THE SMALL DETACHMENTS THAT WOULD INITIALLY GO TO THE SOUTH WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO "OCCUPY" IT IN A NORMAL MILITARY SENSE, BUT WOULD PATROL THIS AREA. ALL PRESENT CONFIRMED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS WITHIN TEN KILOMETERS OF THE BORDER. PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS POINTED OUT THAT PALESTINIAN REFUGEES WOULD REMAIN IN CAMPS NEAR NABATIYAH, BUT AGAIN ALL PRESENT CONFIRMED THAT THESE CAMPS, AS WELL AS THOSE NEAR TYRE, WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE SAME REGULATIONS AS ALL OTHER REFUGEE CAMPS IN LEBANON AND WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED MORE THAN SEVEN LIGHTLY-ARMED INTERNAL SECURITY MEN PER THOUSAND INHABITANTS.

2. I SAID THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND FURTHER DETAILS REGARDING THE NATURE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT, INCLUDING SUCH POINTS AS HOW MANY PALESTINIAN COMBATANTS SYRIA HAD AGREED TO TAKE AND WHEN THE LEBANESE ARMY WOULD MOVE IN. BOUTROS SAID THAT IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE LEBANESE ARMY TROOPS WOULD MOVE IN TO AN AREA ON THE SAME DAY THAT THE PALESTINIANS MOVED OUT. SARKIS CALLED GENERAL KHOURY FOR FURTHER CONSULTATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT (HE ARRIVED AS I WAS LEAVING) AND BOUTROS AGREED

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TO PASS THIS INFORMATION ON TO ME.

3. I TOLD BOUTROS I WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH HIM AGAIN AS SOON AS WE HAD ISRAELI REACTION AND HE SAID HE WOULD GIVE ME ADDITIONAL DETAILS REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT AT THAT TIME. WE AGREED THE LESS SAID TO THE PRESS THE BETTER AND THAT WE WOULD RESTRICT OURSELVES TO SAYING THAT WE WERE DISCUSSING "MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST." I WAS NOT QUESTIONED BY THE PRESS AS I LEFT THE PALACE, BUT BOUTROS IS CERTAIN TO MAKE SOME STATEMENT TODAY SINCE THERE IS A CABINET MEETING SCHEDULED AND THE PRESS WILL BE WAITING FOR HIM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BEIRUT04421
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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Film Number: D770323-0786
Format: TEL
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Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 STATE 212389, 77 STATE 212440
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1371021
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH LEBANON
TAGS: MOPS, MILI, PBOR, IS, LE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f547034d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009